BZA # 17105

Res 04-03

ANC 3F RESOLUTION OF NO OBJECTION TO APPLICATION OF JENNY WAELDER HALL CENTER FOR CHILDREN, INC. FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT 3150 CHEASAPEAKE STREET, NW [BZA APPLICATION NO. 17105]

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F
North Cleveland Park, Forest Hills & Tenleytown
4401-A Connecticut Avenue, N.W., #244
Washington, D.C. 20008-2322

WHEREAS: Jenny Waelder Hall Center For Children, Inc. (Applicant) has applied to the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) for a Special Exception pursuant to the Zoning Regulations (11 DCMR § 3104) to allow a Child Development Center (defined in 11 DCMR § 199) to be located at the Capital Memorial Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 3150 Cheasapeake Street, NW, Washington, DC 20008 (Church) and the BZA has scheduled a hearing on the morning of January 27, 2004; and

WHEREAS: The Church is located in Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) 3F in the R-1-A residential zone; and

WHEREAS: The Zoning Regulations (11 DCMR § 205.1) allow a Child Development Center in the R-1-A zone if approved by the BZA; and

WHEREAS: This ANC is familiar with the Church (where the ANC holds most of its public meetings), including parking facilities for dozens of vehicles, the long, U-shaped driveway swinging around the building, and access thereto, all as described and illustrated in Applicant's Pre-Hearing Statement; and

WHEREAS: The Church building includes a Sanctuary that seats several hundred, a Fellowship Hall at the lower, parking-lot level (where the ANC meets) that seats over 150 for luncheons at tables and more in auditorium style, and with classrooms used as part of Sabbath services (some ten rooms for children's age-appropriate Bible studies and about a half dozen adult venues); and

WHEREAS: The Church serves its members (mostly Maryland and Virginia residents) and, at special events, many others from our neighborhood and the metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS: The Church is an official District of Columbia Polling Place in all General and Primary Elections; and

WHEREAS: In addition to Sabbath services, the Church holds some half dozen special events annually, such as its Food Fair and Health Fair, which it lists on its own website (www.capitalmemorial.org) and to which it invites attendance from near and far; and

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Board of Zoning Adjustment
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WHEREAS: Applicant and the Church have planned coordination to avoid conflicts between timing of Applicant's three or four special events per year (limited to evenings or Sundays) and uses of any Church facilities during the Church's Sabbath (beginning Friday at sundown and including Saturday) or other Church events or events at the playing fields (such as Little League games on Sundays) that are likely to attract many people; and

WHEREAS: Church parking facilities are commonly used during warm weather by families coming to Little League games at the D.C. Parks & Recreation Department ball fields to the west of the Church (at times when the Church makes virtually no use of parking spaces); and

WHEREAS: When Church activities attract many more vehicles than the Church parking spaces, attendees have readily found on-street parking in the vicinity; and

WHEREAS: On-street parking is abundant near the Church (a) because apartment houses and private residences provide off-street parking spaces and (b) because of low building densities to the east of the Connecticut Avenue apartment houses (including zero-population public recreational land between the Church and The Chesapeake Apartment House); and

WHEREAS: Applicant proposes to use Church classroom space that is going unused -- except during Sabbath services -- for up to a maximum of 16 children, six teachers, and two other staff at any one time (in either a nursery school or parent-toddler groups or in a combination of those two programs); and

WHEREAS: No school or child development center holds classes at the Church nor has any school or center done so in recent decades (this not being an application to amend a previous BZA Special Exception); and

WHEREAS: Applicant (as reflected in its Pre-Hearing Statement) has reached out to the community and communicated and consulted with this ANC, individual neighbors of the Church, the Forest Hills Citizens Association (FHCA), and Friends of Forest Hills Playground, as well as agencies of the District of Columbia government, in developing, explaining, and modifying its proposal – including preliminary announcement during this ANC's September 29, 2003, meeting (at the "Open Forum") that it was preparing an application and would welcome community inputs and participation in a Single-Member District meeting for the community at the Church on December 8, 2003; and

WHEREAS: This ANC has studied the proposed Conditions to which Applicant has agreed in consultation with neighbors and community groups, which Conditions are appended hereto; and

APPENDIX: Conditions Agreed to by the Applicant
[as furnished by Applicant on 11 January 2004 and
revised by Applicant at 6 pm 12 January 2004 and as
further revised by Applicant during the course of the ANC public meeting that evening]

[Intended for inclusion in PRE-HEARING STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF JENNY WAELDER HALL CENTER FOR CHILDREN, INC. FOR A CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT 3150 CHESAPEAKE STREET, N.W. to be submitted on January 13, 2004, to the BZA in Application No. 17105]

Conditions

1. The nursery school will operate Monday to Friday mornings from approximately 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with a maximum enrollment of 16 children, 6 teachers and 2 staff.
2. The parent-toddler groups will occur on Monday to Thursday afternoons and will have a maximum of 8 toddlers, 8 parents or caregivers, and 3 teachers. These groups will last for 90 minutes each and will occur between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. There will be one parent-toddler group per afternoon.
3. The Center will give admissions priority to children residing in the Forest Hills neighborhood, assuming such children meet all other criteria for admission. For this purpose, the neighborhood is defined as being the boundaries of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3F.
4. A summer session of the nursery school, if offered, will be limited to an eight-week duration and will enroll no more than 12 children.
5. The Center will take no more than 12 children to the playground at any one time. Use of the playground will occur mid-morning, always under close supervision of staff. If any child demonstrates behavior on the playground that is deemed inappropriate by teachers, that child will be removed from the playground.
6. No more than four special events will take place in any year. Such events will only occur in the evening or on Sunday and will be scheduled to avoid coinciding with other events at the Church that are expected to attract significant numbers of visitors. Notice of special events at the Center will be forwarded to ANC 3F.
7. The Center will provide written traffic and parking instructions to parents and staff, including instructions to enter the Church parking lot via the easternmost driveway from Chesapeake Street, to use the western entrance for drop-off and pick-up of children, and to park only in the Church parking lot. It will also encourage parents to avoid driving on the portion of Gates Road, N.W., between 30th and 31st Streets, N.W.
8. The Center will designate a neighborhood liaison for neighbors to contact to discuss any concerns about the Center's operations.
9. After six months of operation, the Center will offer to meet with ANC 3F or its designees and will offer to meet with this group every six months or as necessary, as determined by the participants. The Center will send an annual written statement of compliance with these conditions to ANC 3F, including information about the total number of enrollees, teachers and staff.

WHEREAS: The Child Development Center, as now proposed, would use productively class room and parking facilities of the Church on days and during hours when they are virtually unused, an excellent example of mixed use with significant positive opportunities and extremely few (if any) negative impacts, considering interests of immediate neighbors, the local community, and the District of Columbia as a whole;

NOW, THEREOFE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, ANC 3F does not object to the Application or the proposed Conditions thereto and designates Commissioners Bardin and Maudlin to represent it before the BZA.

Approved by a vote of 5-1-0 at a duly noticed public meeting with a quorum present (four of the seven commissioners constituting a quorum) on January 12, 2004.

Chair
Cathy Wiss

Secretary
David J. Bardin